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TJERCK CLASSEN DEWITT,

AND SOME OF HIS DESCENDANTS.

WRITTEN BY REV. WILLIAM WALSH,

NEWBURGH, N. Y.—1902.

The Netherlanders, commonly spoken of as Hollanders, founded the first colony on the Atlantic coast of North America north of Jamestown, in Virginia. Lord Chancellor Popham's colony on the Kennebec river, owing to the severity of the climate and other hardships, returned to England the next year after landing, and no attempt was made for another settlement.

In 1609 the independence of the eleven provinces of the Netherlands was acknowledged by Philip of Spain, and they became a Republic. Previous to this the spirit of unrest excited by the long contest with Spain, and perhaps also by the spirit of adventure, ambition and greed, and the hope of finding the fabled Eldorado, was uppermost in the Republic. How, in fact, could the Netherlanders sit with folded hands when their country had been the battlefield of Europe for generations? They were warriors, seamen, traders, merchants, and when Cornelius Houtman found himself at Lisbon, in 1594, on his way home, his tempting accounts of the rich products of the Eastern world fired the adventurous spirit of the Republic, and Houtman was fitted out by Amsterdam merchants with four ships to trade with the East. This was the beginning of the marvelous Indian commerce of the Dutch, and the wealth of the East soon began to pour into Holland. This led, in 1602, to the formation of the Dutch East India Co., with full powers for conquest, colonization and traffic from the Cape of Good Hope east and to the straits of Magellan west.

Not satisfied with the East the Dutch began to look to the West as a tempting field for enterprise, and in 1607, the West India Co. was incorporated for thirty-six years to conquer and colonize from Magellan to Newfoundland. There was no mincing matters with the Dutch; the world was before them and they gave it away without hesitation. And why not? It was just at this time (1607) that Capt. Newport sailed up the Chesapeake Bay and afterwards founded Jamestown.

In 1609, the yacht Half-moon, Captain Hudson, an Englishman in the employ of the West India Co., coasted along from Newfoundland to Jamestown, Virginia, to which he only gave a shy glance. Sailing under the

Dutch flag, he returned north, entered Sandy Hook, Sept. 3rd, 1609, sailed up the "River of the Mountains," finally named the Hudson, after the gallant Captain, as far as Albany, Sept. 22nd. Finding the river too shoal for his vessel, turned the Half-moon to the south, and not loitering to traffic with the Indians, as on his way north, he recrossed the Atlantic and anchored Nov. 7, 1609, at Dartmouth, England, where he was detained some months; but he succeeded in sending his report of his voyage to Amsterdam before his arrival there. Through Hudson's discovery of this noble river, the flag of Holland was borne triumphantly along its banks, the symbol of a civilization which led the way to the foundation of a mighty state.

In 1613, the Nightingale, Capt. Volkertsen, and the Little Fox, under Capt. Jan DeWitt, landed at New Amsterdam to participate in enterprises of their countrymen in the New World. Other vessels began to arrive and the settlements of Forts Amsterdam and Orange were closely surrounded by the houses of the newcomers.

It was after this that the Mayflower (Dec. 11, 1620) landed the band of Puritan saints, who liked not Holland and its Hollanders any too well, on the sterile coast of New England, eleven years after Hudson's entering Sandy Hook. For the earliest struggles for political and religious freedom on the continent we must look outside of New England.

Very few of the colonial families of Orange and Ulster were more prominent in their day and generation than the DeWitts, more especially in the line of Tjerck Classen DeWitt, one of six of the family name who emigrated early to New Amsterdam. The relationship between other families has never been ascertained.

The name of Tjerck Classen DeWitt is first met in register of marriages of the Reformed Dutch Collegiate Church of New York, where it is recorded that on April 24, 1656, "Tjerck Classen DeWitt van Grootholt en Zunderlandt married Barbara Andriessen von Amsterdam." The dates of his birth and of his arrival at Amsterdam are not known; the latter, probably about ~~1630,~~ and his home in the Netherlands was probably in the southern part of East Friesland. In company with him was his brother, Jan (the miller), who lived and died unmarried, and his sister, Emmerentis, who married Martinus Hoffman of Sweden, the ancestor of Eugene Hoffman and Charles F. Hoffman, clergymen of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

Tjerck Classen DeWitt's name would indicate that he was the son of Class, or Nicholas DeWitt, after the custom of the country and the time, and that his mother's first name was Taatje, for his eldest daughter bears that name.

For a short time he lived in New Amsterdam, for his first child was born there, but in the Spring of 1657, he removed to Albany, and from thence, in 1661, to Kingston, where he lived and died, Feb. 17, 1700, and where his wife died July 6, 1714. In Sept., 1660, he exchanged his Albany property with Madame de Hutton for land in Wiltwyck. He was a man of considerable means, having been taxed in 1661, 125 guilders (about $50) for building a church in Esopus. Affairs seemed to prosper with him, as he became the owner of No. 28, New lots. Gov. Lovelace deeded him a parcel of bushland with a house, lot, orchard and pasture land at Kingston, and Gov. Andras deeded 50 acres of woodland. He was one of the signers of the Nichols treaty with the Esopus Indians. He also signed a petition to Gov. Dongan for "right of liberty by charter to Ulster County to choose their own officers to every town court," but Gov.-General Dongan was wroth and the signers were arrested and fined. In 1685, the Trustees of Kingston conveyed to him 180 acres of land. In 1685, 290 acres of land were granted to him by patent 1694. In 1689 he was one of the Magistrates of Ulster County and had held other offices. But finally he died, full of years and honors and having wherewithal to provide by will for his twelve children, that they might make a respectable start in life.

I. The following is the record of the children of Tjerck Classen DeWitt.

1. Andries, born in New Amsterdam in 1657; married, March 7, 1682, Jannetje Egbertson, daughter of Egbert Meindeitse and Jeape Jans.

2. Taatje, born in Albany, about 1659; married, 1677, Matthy Matthysen (Van Keuren); commissioned (1685) captain in the Colonial Army, and later served in the French and Indian war of that period. In June, 1663, Taatje was one of the prisoners with Mrs. Louis Dubois, taken by the Indians to their Shawangunk castle and afterwards rescued.

3. Jannetje married Cornelius Swits, lived in Rochester, Ulster County, and without issue died 1744.

4. Klaes, bapt. Feb. 17, 1664; died previous to 1698.

5. Jan, bapt. Feb. 14, 1668; m. Wyntje Kiersted, d. of Dr. Rudolf and Aagbe Kiersted. Dr. Rudolf was son of Hans and Sarah Kiersted. Saran was the daughter of Anneke Jans, whose heirs contested the property of Trinity Church, New York. Jan DeWitt died previous to Ap., 1715.

6. Gertruy, bapt. Oct. 15, 1668; m., Mch. 24, 1688, Hendrick Hendricksen Schoonmaker, son of Hendrick Jochemsen and Elsie Janse Schoonmaker. Lived in Rochester, Ulster Co., the original settlement of the Schoonmaker family. Had four sons and nine daughters.

7. Jacob, m. Greitje Vernooy, d. of Cornelius C. and Annatje C. Vernooy; lived on Rochester lands; was one of the Trustees of Rochester, and was still living in 1753. He had three sons and three daughters, the youngest, Taatje, bapt. Oct. 12, 1710; m., Mch. 13, 1730, Peter, son of Pierre and Hester Hasbrouck Guymard, who was a French emigrant and settled in the Minising region, now the town of Deerpark, Orange Co., N. Y. Guymard is now a station on the Erie Railroad. Peter Guymard had three sons and three daughters.

8. Rachel, m. Cornelius Bogardus (d. Oct. 13, 1709), son of Cornelius and Helena Teller Bogardus. Cornelius Gogardus was the son of Anneke Jans by her second husband, Rev. Everardus Bogardus, b. Sept. 9, 1640; d. 1666. Helena Teller was the eldest daughter of Wm. Teller, who settled in Albany, 1639; moved to New York and died 1701. After the death of Cornelius Bogardus, Sr., his widow, Helena Teller, married Francis Rombout, a noted French merchant of New York City. Cornelius and Rachel Bogardus had three sons and six daughters.

9. Lucas, m., Dec. 22, 1695, Annetje Delva, d. of Anthony and Jannatje Hillebrant Delva. Annetje was a Roman Catholic. Lucas was captain and joint owner with his father of a sloop, the St. Barbara, "of about fifty Dutch feet by the rule," which, in 1698, they sold to Captain Daniel Hobart, of the Island of Barbadoes, for £200. Lucas died in 1703, leaving two daughters and one son, Lucas, Jr. His widow m., Mch. 31, 1706, Gerrit Van Benschoten, and removed to Catskill. Becoming a widow again she m., Oct. 26, 1721, Hendrick Rosenkrans. Among the descendants of Lucas, Jr., is the Rev. John DeWitt, Prof. Dutch Reformed Seminary, New Brunswick, New Jersey.

10. Peck, m. (1), Jan. 2, 1698, Marytje Janse Vredenburgh, of Albany, and (2), Dec. 21, 1723, Maria Teunis, widow of Jacob DeMott. Lived in New York; subsequently settled on land in Dutchess Co., purchased by his father from Col. Petrus Schuyler, of Albany, Sept. 6, 1698. This land, deeded to him by his father, Feb. 7, 1700, he exchanged with Col. Henry Beckman for land in Ulster Co., whither he removed. He had one daughter, who m., June 3, 1720, Hugo Freer, son of Abraham Freer.

II. Tjerck, bapt. Feb. 11, 1700; died in infancy.

III. Tjerck, bapt. 1703; m., 1737, Marjory Sisson.

IV. Jannetje, bapt. Mch. 24, 1706.

V. Johannes, bapt. Feb. 18, 1709.

VI. Catrena, bapt. June 17, 1711.

Children of Peck DeWitt and his second wife, Maria Teunis.

VII. Christina, bapt. May 23, 1725; m., Nov. 26, 1748, Arie Van Etten, son of Petrus Van Etten.

VIII. Anna Maria, bapt. (Athens Church Record), Ap. 30, 1730; m. (1), Nov. 30, 1749, Frederic Winne; (2), Mch. 13, 1758, Jans L. DeWitt.

11. Tjerck, mentioned in the will of his father as his youngest son; no other record.

12. Marritje, m. (1), Nov. 3, 1700, Hendrick Hendricksen (Kortright), and (2), Jan Macklin.

13. Aaghe, bapt. Jan. 14, 1684; m., Aug. 23, 1712, Jan Pawling, son of Henry and Neltje Roosa Pawling. Removed to Philadelphia Co., Pa. Son Henry, bapt. Nov. 1, 1713. Other children born in Pennsylvania.

Tjerck Classen DeWitt died at Kingston, Feb. 17th, A. D., 1700, and was buried in the burying ground of the Reformed Dutch Church. In the same grave was buried his son, Andries DeWitt, and a cedar post, to which is attached a narrow flagstone, on which is inscribed, "A. D. W., 22 July, 1700," marks the grave. He gave to his adopted country thirteen American born children, and he bequeathed to them evidences of his labors, enterprise and love by last will a large amount of property. His will was also evidence of his strong christian character, in commiting his "soul to God Almighty, his maker, and to Jesus Christ his Redeemer, and to the Holy One his Sanctifier, and his body to the earth whence it came, to be buried in a christian-like manner."

Tjerck Classen DeWitt was not a peasant nor a noble. He came from that class of people which has provided the world with men of eminence, philanthropists, statesmen, generals, judges, rulers who have been an honor and a blessing to their kind, and women whose lives were adorned with every virtue. He left nothing to show what manner of man he was personally, but he did something better, he became the progenitor of a race who now (1902) are scattered widely over our country and a benefit wherever their lot has been cast. The language of his family was not German nor Flemish, but the Low Dutch—that is the Holland language. And the Hollanders retained their language to some extent for some generations, and while Old Amsterdam was the Tyre of the 17th century, I may confidently claim that to no nation in the world is the great Republic of the West more indebted than to the United Provinces of Holland for its noble principles of constitutional freedom, for magnanimous sentiment of religious toleration, for sympathy with the subjects of oppression, for liberal doctrines in trade and commerce, for illustrious patterns of private integrity and public virtue, and for generous and timely aid in the establishment of our national independence. In fact, says a more recent writer than Brodhead, the foundations of our national freedom were laid long before the Pilgrim Fathers set foot on

Plymouth Rock. The idea of popular liberty was as foreign to the Puritan thought as was the toleration of differences in religious belief. There was liberty, sufference, toleration, only for those who were of the Puritan establishment and accepted the stern tenets of the Puritan creed. Through New England, outside of Rhode Island, there prevailed an ecclesiastical tyranny, hard to be borne, pitiless in its administration, cruel even in its tender mercies. Liberty, in its true sense, was only to be found south of New England in the colonies of New Netherland and Virginia.

In religion, DeWitt was not a Lutheran, nor Swiss Presbyterian, nor a Puritan. The Reformed Dutch Church was the church of the Hollanders in the State of New York. They were not Puritans in speech, dress, or in Jewish ideas of keeping Sunday. The Hollanders loved music and art, had organs in their churches, and the violin and the flute in their homes; loved fun and amusement, enjoyed the kermiss, and made Sunday a day of innocent enjoyment and rest as well as of prayer and divine services. Wherever the Reformed Dutch Church has existed in the United States in its purity it has been one of the most conservative and useful of the ecclesiastical corporations and diligent in Christian work.

The oldest son of Tjerck Classen DeWitt was Andries, born in New Amsterdam, 1657; m. Jannetje Egbertsen, d. of Egbert M. and Jaepe Janse, Mch. 7, 1682, and had twelve children, of whom Tjerck, the eldest, and Helena, Egbert, Johannes, and Andres, were persons of note. Tjerck's family I will leave for the later part of this paper. Helena, the eighth child, b. Dec. 7, 1695, m. June 6, 1719, Jacob Swits, of Albany, son of Isaac and Susannah G. Swits, and nephew of Cornelius Swits, who married Jannetje DeWitt. Among her children was Col. Abraham Swits, prominent in the Revolution.

Egbert, b. Mch. 18, 1699, m. Nov. 4, 1726, Mary Nottingham, d. of William and Margaret Rutsen Nottingham, and had ten children, one daughter and nine sons. The daughter, Mary (Maria), m. the then Captain James Clinton, subsequently General in the Revolutionary Army, whose son was DeWitt Clinton.

Johannis, b. Mch. 26, 1701, m. June 17, 1724, Mary Brodhead, d. of Charles and Maria Ten Broeck Brodhead. His son, Col. Charles DeWitt, m. Blandina Dubois, and was a prominent officer and actor in Colonial affairs during the Revolution.

John C., son of Col. Charles, m. Cornelia, d. of Matthew Cantine, and had fourteen children, twelve of whom lived to be old men and women. Moses E. and Aaron B. (the 12th birth) were twins, and died at the ages of 71 and 70. Moses E. m. (1) Saloma, widow of Rev. John Nottingham, and had Charles and Catherine; (2) Lydia Ann, d. of David Miller, of New

Jersey, and five children, born at Paterson, N. J., first, David M., of Kingston, N. Y., and has four sons, and William C., of Brooklyn, N. Y., both counsellors-at-law. The sons of Egbert, son of Andries, here given more at large.

Andries, son of Egbert, was a physician for half a century in Ulster County; b. Oct. 15, 1727; died, New Paltz, Sept. 30, 1799. One of his sons was Surveyor General of the State of New York. The following account is taken from the Albany Argus:

THE LATE SIMEON DEWITT.

A tablet has recently been placed in the Middle (Old South) Dutch Church in memory of the late Simeon DeWitt It is constructed of Italian statuary marble, exceedingly chaste and appropriate in its design, and in unison with the architecture of the beautiful edifice in which it has been erected. Our citizens, and especially the older part of them, will be highly gratified in finding this permanent memorial placed among them of one who was so well known and universally respected and whose purity of character and integrity of purpose adorned a long, useful and virtuous life. Inscription on the tablet:

In Memory of
Simeon DeWitt,
Born Dec. 25, 1756, at Wawarsing, Ulster County,
Died Dec. 3, 1834, at Ithaca, Tompkins County.

His youth was devoted to study. His manhood to the services of his country. His whole life to the cause of Virtue and Religion. During the war of the Revolution he was Chief of the Topographical Staff under Washington, and was honored with his friendship and confidence. For fifty years he was Surveyor General of the State of New York. For five years Chancellor of the University. An honest and enlightened public officer. He was one of that noble band to whose patriotic wisdom and virtue our Republic owes it prosperity and power. For many years an officer and member of this church. While by his life he proved the truth and power of religion, in his death he was supported by its hopes and consolations.

This tablet, an offering of their affection, has been erected by his children at the invitation of this church.

Simeon DeWitt was married thrice: 1, to Elizabeth Lynott; 2, to Jannatje Varick, widow of Abraham Hardenberg; 3, to Susan Lynn, d. of Rev. William Lynn. His son, Richard Varick DeWitt's family, were residents of Albany, 1863.

Benjamin DeWitt, brother of Simeon, and fourteenth child of Andries and Janet V. DeWitt, b. Dec. 6, 1775; died Sept. 10, 1877, in New York City. He m. Sept. 27, 1800, Eve Bloodgood, d. of James and Lydia V. V.

Bloodgood. Benjamin DeWitt was a physician, and for some time Health Officer of the Port of New York. His death was caused by yellow fever. The following notice was taken from the New York Times:

COLUMBIA COLLEGE.

ANNUAL COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.

The fifty-fourth annual commencement of this Institution was held at Irving Hall last evening. There was a large and highly intelligent audience in attendance. Dr. Thomas W. Blatchford delivered the oration before the alumni, in which he traced the history of the Institution. He spoke of Benjamin DeWitt, M. D., adjunct Professor of Natural Philosophy, as a fine-looking gentleman, of a tall, portly, commanding figure, open countenance, affable manners, pleasing address and delivery, a popular lecturer and a great favorite with the students, and especially with those who took an interest in Natural Philosophy.

Dr. DeWitt was an early and warm friend of the College. His social position, added to his personal influence and his scientific acquirements, made him an important member of the Faculty, and combined with the political influence of his brother Simeon, enabled him to be of great service in procuring the necessary legal enactments required by the college.

Mr. T. B. Satterthaite, a prominent and wealthy citizen of New York, president of the New York Mutual Insurance Company, and also of the Board of Underwriters of New York, was a son-in-law of the late Dr. Benjamin DeWitt.

Johannes DeWitt, the eleventh son of Andries and Jannetje Egbertsen DeWitt, b. Mch. 26, 1701; m., June 17, 1724, Mary Brodhead, d. of Charles and Maria Ten Broeck Brodhead, and had two sons and two daughters. The oldest son, Charles, b. 1727; d. 1787; m., Dec. 20, 1754, Blandina, d. of Gerrit and Margaret Elmendorf Dubois.

Charles DeWitt was one of the most prominent men of Ulster County in the events which preceded and accompanied the war of the Revolution. From 1768 to 1775, he was a member of the Colonial Assembly, and, as a member of the last legislative body which sat under Royal authority, was one of the nine resolute and patriotic men who voted to approve of the Continental Congress, then recently organized in Philadelphia. He was a member of the Provincial Convention of April, 1775, and of the third and fourth Provincial Congresses, where he was associated with John Jay, William Duer and others in the Committee for Defeating Conspiracies, etc. Dec. 21, 1775, he was commissioned as Colonel of minute men. When the State Government was organized, Col.

DeWitt was made a member of the committee to draft a Constitution; and from 1781 to 1785 he sat in the State Assembly. A sketch of Col. DeWitt's life may be found in the Ulster County Historical collection.

The family of John C., son of Col. Charles DeWitt, has been mentioned before.

Egbert DeWitt, the tenth son of Andries and Jannetje Egbertsen, b. Mch. 16, 1699; m., Nov. 4, 1726, Mary Nottingham, d. of William and Margaret Rutsen Nottingham, and had ten children, nine sons and one daughter, Maria, the wife of Gen. James Clinton. His first son, Andries, was a life-long physician in Ulster County, and the father of Simeon and Benjamin DeWitt. His second son, Jacob Rutsen, was a captain in the Revolution, and as a surveyor established the boundary line between New York and Pennsylvania. He held office as Judge and Surrogate in Herkimer and Onondaga Counties. One of his daughters m. Lieut Robert Burnet, of Revolutionary fame otherwise known as Major Robert Burnet, of Little Britain. His eighth son was Thomas, b. May 3, 1741; m. Elsie Hasbrouck, b. 20 Mch., 1750, d. of Jacob and Maria Hasbrouck. When the Revolutionary War broke out he went into the army as Captain in the Third New York Regiment; afterwards was promoted to the rank of Major; was stationed for some time at Fort Stanwix (Col. Peter Gansevoort in command), and assisted at its defense when besieged by the British under Col. St. Leger in 1777. In 1779 Major DeWitt was with Gen. Sullivan's successful expedition against the Indians. After the close of the war he lived at Kingston, where he died Sept. 7, 1809.

Major Thomas DeWitt's eldest son, Jacob H., was adjutant in the war of 1812; afterwards was commissioned as Colonel. In 1819 was elected by the Clintonian party to Congress. In 1839 and 1847 was a member of the State Legislature. He died at Kingston Jan. 30, 1857, in his 73rd year.

The Rev. Dr. Thomas DeWitt, Major DeWitt's youngest son, was a graduate of Union College, Schenectady, N. Y. After completing his theological studies, and for a time a pastor in Duchess Co., he was called to the Collegiate Reformed Dutch Church in New York City, of which he was for many years the honored and beloved senior pastor. Dr. DeWitt was one of the most learned and able theologians of his time. He was president of the New York Historical Society. He was born Sept. 13, 1791; m., Oct. 16, 1826, Eliza Ann Waterman, d. of Jedediah and Julia P. Waterman; died May 18, 1874.

Jacob Hasbrouck DeWitt, eldest son of Thomas, and brother of Rev. Dr. DeWitt, was a resident of Kingston; was Adjutant in War of 1812, afterwards Col. in State Militia; was a member of Congress and also of the

Legislature of New York. His daughter, Mary, married ——— Evans, and to their son, Thomas G. Evans, counsellor-at-law, the DeWitt family are deeply indebted for securing a very complete record of its history.

Tjerck, the oldest son of Andries and Jannetje Egbertsen DeWitt, and grandson of T. C. DeWitt, was bapt. Jan. 12, 1683; m., Jan. 18, 1708, Anne Pawling (bapt. June 19, 1687), daughter of Henry and Neltje Roosa Pawling, by whom he had six children. For his second wife he married Deborah (bapt. Sept. 14, 1684), d. of Egbert H. and Annetje B. Schoonmaker. Tjerck died at Kingston Aug. 30, 1762, with no issue by his second wife.

Petrus DeWitt, the fifth child of Tjerck and Anne Pawling DeWitt, was bapt. July 15, 1752; died Jan. 3, 1790; married Rachel Radcliff, d. of Joachum and Hillitje Hogebom Radcliff. Joachum Radcliff and wife were married at Claverack, Feb. 23, 1722 or '23, by Rev. Petrus Van Driesen. Petrus DeWitt and Rachel Radcliff were married June 8, 1749, with a license by Rev. Geo. Wilhelmus Mancius, of Kingston, and resided on lands at Pawling's purchase, given him by his father (probably now "the Locust," owned by the Dinsmore family), having been inherited by his mother from her father, Henry Pawling, to whom 4,000 acres of land were granted by Patent by Gov. Fletcher, May 11, 1696. This tract of land was on the east side of Hudson's River, south of and adjoining the town of Rhinebeck, extending east to the Crum Elbow Creek, and following that creek to Hudson's River. The family of Henry Pawling were: 1, Jane; 2, Wyntje; 3, John; 4, Albert; 5, Anne; 6, Henry, and 7, Mary. By one of the descendants of Henry, Jr., Henry Pawling is said to have been a British officer, a friend of William Penn, from whom he received a grant of 5,000 acres of land in Montgomery Co., Pennsylvania. The family appear to have sold out the Duchess County land and removed to Pennsylvania, where their descendants are still (1902) living.

Petrus DeWitt, b. in Kingston, m. Rachel Radcliff, Dec. 14, 1723. The following entries in his Bible on the occasion of his marriage and the birth of his children are perhaps without a parallel at the present day (1902):

On his marriage:

> "The Holy Trinity grant us health and happiness in this state to the glory of His Holy Name and to the salvation of our souls, and that we may live together to see our children and their children in peace, holiness and prosperity in such a form that we may, with a clear conscience, present them with us at the last day before the merciful throne of our Blessed Saviour, there to hear His blessed voice, come ye blessed children of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world."

On the birth of his only son, John DeWitt:

"1752, Feb. 24. At one o'clock p. m. was born our first son, John. The Lord of Heaven and earth bless him with many happy days that through the grace of God he may grow up in wisdom and understanding to the honor of His Holy Name; to the greatest joy and satisfaction of his parents, in the love, to the wonder and assistance of his neighbors, and a true lover of his country in all that is just and right.

"He is named after his uncle, John DeWitt, b. Aug. 13, 1720, and died May 30, 1749, in Bermuda. His God-father is my honored father, Tjerck DeWitt, and his God-mother my step-mother, Deborah. He was presented to baptism by Hilgontje Van Dusen, and was baptized by the Rev. Eggo Tonkins Van Hoevenbergh."

On the birth of his first daughter:

"1753, Dec. 31. Hillitje, our first daughter, was born about 9 o'clock p. m.

"The Creator of mankind grant her grace to grow up in truth and righteousness and bless her in a long life in peace, plentifulness and prosperity, and when her days are so spent, to take her to Himself in eternal bliss.

"My father-in-law, Joachim Radcliff, is her God-father, and my mother-in-law, Hillitje, is her God-mother, and is named after her God-mother. She was presented to baptism by Madam Van Hoevenbergh, and was baptized by the Rev. Eggo Tonkins Van Hoevenbergh.

"1762, Oct. 26, was born our second daughter, Ann. My brother Andreas being God-father, and his spouse, Rachel, being her God-mother. She was named after my mother, Ann Pawling, and was baptized by Rev. Eggo Tonkins Van Hoevenbergh.

"The Creator of the Universe, wherein she is corporated, grant her long life, and health, and happiness, and wealth, and charity, to the glory of her Redeemer, to the full satisfaction of her parents, and the salvation of her precious soul.

"This lady was married to Philip D. Bevier, Esquire, of Rochester in Ulster Co., has one son and seven daughters. Died Nov., 1834.

"Hillitje DeWitt died at Rochester, 1807, and was buried there.

"Petrus DeWitt died Jan. 3, 1790, aged 69 years and 6 mos. Rachel, his widow, died July 20, 1794, and are buried in the churchyard of the Reformed Dutch Church of Rhinebeck. The headstones to their graves and also those of Neltje and Miles Sherbrook, children of John and Catherine Van Vleet, have been in good order."

The record of the Radcliff family, which gave Petrus DeWitt his wife, Rachel, goes back near to 1650, in Joachim, who m. Rachel Lambertse Van Valkenberg. Of their six children, Joachim, Jr., was the youngest.

He was born Nov. 22, 1697, and m. Hillitje Hogeboom, Feb. 23, 1722-'23. 1. Rachel, m. Petrus DeWitt; 2, Johannes, m. Hillitje Schermerhorn; 3, Janetje, m. Rev. Eggo Tonkins Van Hoevenbergh; 4, Hillitje, m. Adam Barach (now Berg), and had daughters, Mrs. Spencer, Mrs. Spies, and son Jacob, m. Leah Radcliff, and his daughter, Mrs. Kipp of Rhinebeck Landing.

William Radcliff, son of Joachim, Jr., b. July 6, 1737; m., Ap. 10, 1761, Sarah Kip, of Kipsburg, by Dominie Van Hoevenbergh. He had seven children: 1, Hillitje, m. Moses Cantine of Kingston Point; 2, Jacob, m. d. of Rev. Wm. Smith of Sharon, Conn.; 3, Claritje, died young; 4, William, m. Catherine Van Ness of Redhook; 5, Claritje, m. John V. H. Huyck, d., Mr. and Mrs. Julia Baldwin, of Middletown, Conn.; 6, John, m. Jane, d. of Gen. David Van Ness of Redhook; 7, Peter, m. d. of John Davenport, of Stamford, Conn. Of these four sons, Jacob and William were graduates of Princeton College; John and Peter graduates of Yale. Jacob and Peter became eminent as lawyers; William and John were merchants in New York in the Demerara trade.

Petrus DeWitt's only son, John, b. Feb. 24, 1752, m. Catherine Van Vleet, oldest d. of Dirck and Helena Weaver Van Vleet, of Charlotte Precinct, Duchess Co., Apr., 1773; John 21 and the bride 18. The connection was said to be very distasteful to his parents, but Catherine was a beautiful girl, and the story runs that John, one morning, saddled his horse, put on a pillion and met the beauty, rode to Rhinebeck and probably were married by Rev. Mr. Keogh, pastor of the R. Dutch Church. Mch. 2, 1774, was born their oldest child; bapt. Ap. 10, by Rev. Mr. Keogh, her grandfather, Peter, and Grandmother, Rachel, being her God-father and God-mother. The runaway couple had been forgiven, but this did not prevent his father, Petrus, from banishing his son to a farm five miles east of Hyde Park, called Clinton's Corners, where John built a commodious house, and there his beautiful and buxom wife made him the happy father of 14 children, viz:

1,Rachel, m. Joshua Ebenezer Rathbone Birch, M. D., of North East, who subsequently settled in New York and had six children. 2. May 13, 1775, Helena, her grandparents, Dirck and Helena Van Vliet, being her God-father and God-mother; m. Dr. Gilbert Smith, of New Town, Long Island, subsequently of New York, and had seven children. 3, Neltje, b. 1776, died young, buried in Rhinebeck church yard. 4. Oct. 3, 1778, Neltje, died at West Point, N. Y., Sept. 21, 1832. 5. Ap. 19, 1780, Peter; m. Janet d. of George Gosman; had 10 sons and 2 daughters; died St1. Mark's Place, New York, May 10, 1851; 71 years of age on the 19th of April previous (1851. 6. Cornelius, b. April 1, 1782; d. Newburgh, N. Y., Dec. 5, 1809;

buried in old Newburgh burying ground. 7. B. Oct. 18, 1783, Hillitje; m. John Chambers, Newburgh, May 9, 1809; had 2 sons and 2 daughters; d. June 13, 1856. 8. Mar. 27, 1785, Andrew, single; d. Oct. 25, 1840. 9. Aug. 6, 1786, Elizabeth; m. John H. Walsh; had 4 sons and 3 daughters. 10. Apr. 2nd, 1788, Richard; d. single, Nov. 5, 1806. 11. Apr. 13, 1790, Miles Sherbrook; d. Jan. 30, 1795. 12. Feb. 25, 1792, William Radcliff; m., 1, Julia Woodhull; 2, Mary Elizabeth Wallace. 13. Jan. 14, 1794, John; m. Harriet, d. W. A. Clark, of Cornwall, N. Y.; had 4 daughters and 1 son. 14. Feb. 16, 1800, Miles; died 1812, from a fall from a horse; buried in Newburgh burying ground.

John DeWitt's wife, Catherine, died at Newton, Long Island, when on a visit to her d. Mrs. Helena Smith, Sept. 29, 1804. This loss led to his removal from Duchess Co. to Albany, N. Y. He sold all his possessions, farm, mill, store, &c., gave freedom to a number of black slaves, all old enough to care for themselves, and remained in Albany two years, when he came to Newburgh, N. Y. (1806) for the purpose of purchasing lands for friends in Rhinebeck, Albany and himself, in Sullivan County. He purchased a large tract, employed surveyors, built roads and some sort of a house, and from fatigue and exposure contracted fever and died on the 28th day of April, 1808, in his 57th year. The grave of John DeWitt is in the Old Newburgh Burying Ground with those of four of his sons.

It may be justly said that John DeWitt was a man of superior character. To strong natural abilities and the best education the times afforded, to good sense were united in him the best moral qualities of the Holland character, and what some scarcely regard as characteristic of the Hollander, enterprise, forethought and far-sightedness. He was one of the first farmers of Duchess County to introduce plaster as a fertilizer: he gave freedom to his slaves when the separation would be a boon to them and no loss to himself. Along with his father he cast his lot with the patriots of our country and served as Captain in a regiment who guarded the Connecticut frontier. After peace with Great Britain was achieved, he was a member of the Assembly of New York, 1786, 1788, 1789 and 1794. Twice he was sheriff of Duchess County under the Council of Appointment, viz., from 1789 to 1793 and from 1794 to 1797, and was urged by Gov. Jay to take a third appointment. But the most notable event in his public life was his appointment along with Zephaniah Platt, Malanchon Smith, Jacobus Swartwout, Jonathan Akins, Ezra Thompson and Gilbert Livingston to represent Duchess County in the Convention called to consider and vote on the adoption of the Federal Constitution. Sixty-five members from 14 counties assembled in Poughkeepsie June 17; adjourned July 26, 1788. Gov. George Clinton, from Ulster, presided: Gen. James Clinton was also

a member, and the brothers led the Clintonian faction. Alexander Hamilton, of New York, was leader of the Federalist section. Party feeling, influence and discussion ran high and prolonged the sessions to that extent, and that when news was received of the vote of New Hampshire and Virginia in favor of the adoption of the Constitution, making the nine votes necessary to the adoption, New York's was no longer necessary, but on the final vote 31 voted in favor and 27 against adoption. John DeWitt voted in favor of the Federal Constitution. He then broke from the Clintonians and the aspirations of Gov. George Clinton for the Presidency were defeated. Here the political career of John DeWitt ended. He served his country well and died. He was strongly in favor of the Constitution by which "we, the people of the United States," were made a consolidated nation. It was from the personal sacrifices and labors of many members of the DeWitt family that succeeding generations have enjoyed the blessing of a free and enlightened Government.

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